

we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Most writers have supposed the apostle to refer either to the promise made to Abraham, that his seed should inherit the land, or to a prophecy in Isaiah, which says, "Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, or come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old; but the sinner, being a hundred years old, shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the works of their hands. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."

Now, it seems highly probable that the new heavens and earth, here described, represent a state of things on the present earth before the day of judgment, and not a heavenly and immortal state; for sin and death are spoken of as existing in it; both which, we are assured, will be excluded from heaven. Hence able biblical writers refer this prophecy to the millennial state, or the period when there will be a general prevalence of Christianity. In this they are probably correct. But some of these writers, as Low and Whitby, proceed a step farther, and infer that Peter's description of the new heavens and new earth belong also to the millennial period; first, because they presume that the apostle referred to this promise in Isaiah; and secondly, because he uses the same terms, namely, "new heavens and new earth." But are these grounds sufficient to justify so important a conclusion? How common it is to find the same words and phrases in the Bible applied by different writers to different subjects, especially by the prophets! Even if we can suppose Peter to place the new heavens and the new earth before the judgment, in despite of